

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 022019

R 031200Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5989

INFO CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 PHNOM PENH 6270

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS INFO SEC DEFENSE, CJCS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, CB

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH MARSHAL LON NOL

1. ACCOMPANIED BY GENERAL PALMER, I CALLED ON MARSHAL LON NOL AFTERNOON MAY 3. PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS TO FOCUS MARSHAL'S ATTENTION ON (A) NEED FOR FANK TO CUT DOWN ON AMMUNITION CONSUMPTION, (B) PROGRESSIVELY REDUCE AMERICAN C-130 AIRDROPS, AND (C) REVIEW CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION. WE PROPOSED SPECIFIC MEASURES AND TO HELP MARSHAL CARRY THROUGH WITH THESE IDEAS, I LEFT WITH HIM MY TAKING POINTS PAPER FROM WHICH I MADE PRESENTATION. IN SUBSEQUENT TELEGRAM I WILL REPORT ON MARSHAL'S REACTIONS.

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF TALKING POINTS PAPER WHICH I GAVE TO THE MARSHAL:

1. TIGHTNESS OF MAP FUNDS FOR FY 74.

A. EXPLAIN THAT OF THE \$325 MILLION AVAILABLE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1974, NEARLY EVERY DOLLAR HAS BEEN OBLIGATED.

B. ALTHOUGH I HAVE URGED THAT ADDITIONAL FUNDS BE MADE

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AVAILABLE TO KHMER REPUBLIC IN THIS FASCAL YEAR, I AM

NOT SANGUINE THAT WE WILL GET THEM. (PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION)

C. OF THE \$325 MILLION AVAILABLE, \$266 MILLION OR 82 PERCENT HAVE BEEN SPENT ON AMMUNITION.

D. EXPLAIN THAT IF MONEY USED FOR AMMUNITION, IT PRECLUDES SPENDING THESE FUNDS ON HARDWARE ITEMS SUCH AS RIVER CRAFT, PLANES, APCs, ETC.

2. REDUCE AMMUNITION CONSUMPTION.

IT IS THEREFORE IMPERATIVE THAT FANK CUT DOWN ON AMMO CONSUMPTION. FANK AND AMERICAN MILITARY MISSION MUST CONTROL MORE EFFECTIVELY RELEASE OF AMMO. FANK MUST INSTILL AMMUNITION DISCIPLINE IN FIELD COMMANDERS TO AVOID UNNECESSARILY H & I FIRING, ETC. CINC FANK MEETS WITH ALL COMMANDERS MAY 7 TO DISCUSS THIS.

3. STATUS OF REQUESTS FOR 1975 FOR KHMER REPUBLIC.

A. EXECUTIVE BRANCH REQUESTED \$390 MILLION FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND \$110 MILLION FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. WE DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH CONGRESS WILL ACTUALLY APPROVE.

B. PL 480 AGRICULTURAL SURPLUS COMMODITIES ARE ADDITIONAL. IN FISCAL YEAR 1974 THEY CAME TO \$190 MILLION. I HAVE JUST RECEIVED AUTHORIZATION TO SIGN WITH PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET AN INCREASE IN THE 1974 PL 480 PROGRAM. THIS PROGRAM WILL INCREASE FROM \$170 MILLION TO \$190 MILLION BECAUSE WASHINGTON AGREED TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL 35 THOUSAND METRIC TONS OF RICE UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

C. I DON'T EXPECT CONGRESS TO VOTE THE FISCAL YEAR 1975 FUNDS BEFORE SOMETIME THIS FALL. THIS MEANS A DELAY IN HAVING AMPLE FUNDS FOR THE FIRST COUPLE OF MONTHS OF FISCAL YEAR 1975 (JULY-SEPTEMBER). WE ARE WORKING ON THIS PROBLEM (EFFECT OF CRA ON CAMBODIAN MAP) WITH WASHINGTON AND CINCPAC.

4. NEED TO REDUCE AMERICAN AIRDROPS BY C-130 PLANES WORKING OUT OF THAILAND.

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A. HIGHER MILITARY HEADQUARTERS AND HIGH LEVEL VISITORS TO PHNOM PENH HAVE STRESSED THE NEED FOR US TO FIND WAYS OF REDUCING THE NUMBER OF AIRDROPS BY AMERICAN C-130 PLANES FROM UTAPAO.

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B. AT THE PRESENT TIME THESE DROPS AVERAGE ABOUT
12 TO 14 DROPS PER DAY.

C. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THOSE ENCLAVES WHICH CAN BE
SUPPLIED EITHER BY RIVER OR BY AIR LANDING (C-123S)
BE WEANED FROM U.S. AIRDROPS. TWO SPECIFIC ENCLAVES
COME TO MIND:

(1) KAMPOT, WHICH SHOULD BE SUPPLIED IN
AMMUNITION AND RICE BY BOAT. WE ARE GRATIFIED
TO HEAR THAT FINALLY THE RIVER IS OPEN AGAIN,
WHICH WILL ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR AMERICAN
AIRDROPS.

(2) TAKEO. I VISITED TAKEO MAY 2; WAYS MUST
BE FOUND TO PARTIALLY SUPPLY TAKEO BY LANDING
KAF C-123 PLANES. THIS IS A SECURITY PROBLEM.
WE HAVE DISCUSSED IT WITH COLONEL KIEN TRI ON
THE SPOT. PERHAPS FANK SUCCESS AT KAMPOT WILL
PERMIT THE RETURN TO TAKEO OF SOME TAKEO TROOPS
WHO HAVE BEEN FIGHTING IN KAMPOT. INCREASED
COMBAT TROOP STRENGTH SHOULD PERMIT COLONEL TRI
TO SECURE THE AREA AROUND THE AIRFIELD MAKING IT
SAFE FOR LANDING C-123 AIRCRAFT. ALREADY NOW

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C-123S SHOULD FLY IN AND LAND OCCASIONALLY TO
SUPPLEMENT C-130 AIRDROPS.

D. AIRDROP PARACHUTES MUST BE RETURNED QUICKLY TO
U.S. CONTROL. WE WILL FACE CRITICAL SHORTAGES IF
THIS IS NOT DONE.

5. BRIGHT SPOTS ON THE MILITARY SCENE.

A. NEWS FROM BOTH KAMPOT AND PREY ENG HAS RECENTLY
BEEN GOOD. AFTER THE SETBACKS IN THE OUDONG/KOMPONG
LUONG AREA, THE GKR SHOULD HIGHLIGHT THE SUCCESSFUL
DEFENSE OF PREY VENG WHERE MORE THAN 100 ENEMY WERE
KILLED.

B. THE SUCCESSFUL RE-OPENING OF THE RIVER AT KAMPOT
ALSO NOTABLY IMPROVED FANK POSITION. KAMPOT IS
ALREADY A FANK SUCCESS.

C. OPTIMISM JUST AS PESSIMISM IS CONTAGIOUS. AFTER
THE SETBACKS AT OUDONG AND KOMPONG LUONG, IT IS
ESSENTIAL TO PUBLICIZE FANK'S SUCCESSES AT KAMPOT AND
PREY VENG THEREBY REVERSING THE ATMOSPHERE OF GLOOM
THAT HAD SPREAD AS A RESULT OF THE SETBACKS IN THE
AREA NORTH OF PHNOM PENH.

D. I WILL TAKE THIS LINE WITH THE AMERICAN PRESS ON
SATURDAY BUT KHMERS SHOULD DO THE SAME. WHILE ONE
SWALLOW DOESN'T MAKE FOR A SUMMER, NEVERTHELESS, IT
SHOULD BE HIGHLIGHTED TO VIE A BALANCED, ACCURATE
PICTURE OF THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC.

E. FANK AND ITS LEADERS ARE TO BE CONGRATULATED.

6. BASSAC/TAKHMAU.

A. AFTER THE ENEMY SUCCESSFULLY NIBBLED AWAY AT FANK
IN THAT AREA AND GAINED SOME TERRITORY, IT APPEARS
THE SECOND AND FIRST DIVISIONS HAVE STABILIZED THE
FRONT.

B. STABILIZATION IS NOT ENOUGH BECAUSE THE ENEMY IS
WITHIN MORTAR RANGE OF THE SOUTHERN SUBURBS OF PHNOM
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PENH.

C. THE FIRST DIVISION SHOULD MAKE AN ENVELOPING MOVE
TO FORCE THE ENEMY TO WITHDRAW IN THE BASSAC/TAKHMAU
AREA.

7. LOVEK--FESTERING BOIL. URGENT ACTION NEEDED.

A. WHILE I FEEL FANK IS PREPARED IN MOST OF THE AREAS UNDER ENEMY ATTACK, AT LOVEK I AM UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT FANK IS NOT.

B. UNLESS FANK ACTS QUICKLY, LOVEK WILL END IN A DISASTER.

C. INCREASED AIR SUPPORT IS NEEDED WHILE THE TROOPS MOVE OUT TO ENLARGE THE PERIMETER.

D. HAS THE 80TH BRIGADE MOVED EAST TO ESTABLISH A BEACHHEAD ON THE TONLE SAP AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED?

E. MEDICAL CONDITIONS ARE VERY POOR. HAVE MORE DOCTORS BEEN SENT TO LOVEK?

F. IS IT CLEAR WHO IS IN COMMAND AT LOVEK? WHAT ARE THE PLANS TO IMPROVE THE MILITARY SITUATION THERE?

G. IN CASE OF A SETBACK AND TO DENY ARMS TO THE ENEMY, OLD CHINESE, SOVIET AND CZECH RIFLES NEED TO BE MADE INOPERATIVE AND THE DEFENDERS SHOULD ALL BE ARMED WITH STANDARD AMERICAN WEAPONS WHICH WE UNDERSTAND ARE AVAILABLE AT THE LOVEK TRAINING CENTER.

8. KOMPONG THOM.

A. I VISITED THERE LAST WEEK AND FOUND IT TO BE A BRIGHT SPOT. GOOD LEADER AND PEOPLE HAVE HOPE. ACHIEVEMENTS IN CIVILIAN FIELD ARE NOTABLE.

B. ENEMY OBVIOUSLY CANNOT PERMIT SUCH A SUCCESS STORY. WE HAVE INDICATIONS THAT THE ENEMY IS MOVING UP SIX BATTALIONS TO REINFORCE THE RELATIVELY WEAK TEN ENEMY BIONS IN THE REGION. WE EXPECT AN ATTACK IN THE
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NEAR FUTURE.

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C. PERHAPS THE 12TH BRIGADE CAN BE RETURNED FROM KAMPOT AFTER SITUATION HAS QUIETENED DOWN THERE OR ONCE FRESH REPLACEMENTS HAVE BEEN SENT TO KAMPOT. THE 12TH BRIGADE IS FROM KOMPONG THOM AND WOULD FIGHT WELL THERE.

D. CLOSER LIAISON BETWEEN GROUND FORCES AND KAF IN KOMPONG THOM IS NEEDED TO ASSURE THAT GENERAL TEAP BEN WILL GET NECESSARY AIR SUPPORT WHEN HE NEEDS IT ONCE ATTACK HAS STARTED.

9. NEED TO RETIRE SOME OLDER GENERALS.

A. SOME OF THE YOUNG DYNAMIC GENERALS AND FULL COLONELS HAVE MADE AN EXCELLENT IMPRESSION ON ME. SUCH MEN SHOULD BE PLACED IN POSITIONS OF COMMAND.

B. TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE MORE DYNAMIC, AGGRESSIVE MEN AND PERMIT THEM TO ASSUME INCREASED MILITARY RESPONSIBILITY, I URGE THE MARSHAL TO RETIRE A NUMBER OF OLDER GENERALS.

C. A DETERMINED WEEDING OUT WOULD GIVE HOPE AND INJECT INCREASED EFFICIENCY AND AGGRESSIVENESS INTO FANK.

D. I WOULD HOPE THAT THE MARSHAL CAN COME UP WITH SPECIFIC NAMES OF OFFICERS TO BE RETIRED IN THE NEAR
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FUTURE.

10. ABSENTEEISM.

A. MANY HUNDREDS OF SOLDIERS ARE WALKING THE STREETS OF PHNOM PENH OR ATTENDING CINEMAS. THEY SHOULD RIGHTLY BE

WITH INTERVENTION UNITS.

B. THE GREAT TRAGEDY IS THE FAILURE OF COMBAT INTERVENTION UNITS BEING UP TO FULL STRENGTH. THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH MEN IN THE FRONT LINES AND TOO MANY IN PHNOM PENH.

C. EXISTING DIVISIONS (ESPECIALLY THE FIRST DIVISION) SHOULD HAVE PRIORITY OF FILL OVER THE NINTH DIVISION.

D. URGENT NEED FOR FANK IMMEDIATELY TO STEP UP EFFORTS TO PICK UP SOLDIERS WHO DO NOT HAVE LEAVE PAPERS AND RETURN THEM TO THEIR UNITS.

E. DETERMINED DRIVE IN PHNOM PENH FOR ONE WEEK WOULD, IN MY OPINION, NET 10,000 SOLDIERS WHO ARE ABSENT FROM THEIR COMBAT UNITS WITHOUT PROPER JUSTIFICATION.

F. UNLESS THIS PROBLEM AND INCREASED RECRUITING IS PROPERLY ATTACKED, FANK WILL NEVER BREAK THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF MERELY "HANGING ON" AND RESPONDING TO ENEMY INITIATIVES.

G. WHEN CAN WE EXPECT FANK COOPERATION WITH THE GENDARMERIE TO LAUNCH SUCH A DRIVE TO PICK UP AWOLS IN PHNOM PENH?

11. ECONOMIC REFORMS.
CONGRATULATE THE MARSHAL FOR THE COURAGEOUS STEPS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD WHICH WERE WELL RECEIVED IN WASHINGTON.

12. NEED FOR POLITICAL STABILITY.
SOME SOCIO-REPUBLICANS HAVE BEEN MOUTHING THREATENING NOISES AGAINST GOVERNMENT LEADERS AND HAVE BEEN HIGHLY CRITICAL OF CERTAIN KEY MILITARY OFFICIALS. NOTHING IS GAINED BY INJECTING PETTY POLITICAL SQUABBLING INTO
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AN ALREADY DIFFICULT SITUATION. THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WOULD BE UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND POLITICAL BICKERING WHEN THE KHMER NATION IS "IN DANGER".
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